



Winter Trails



Routes and Trails For Snowshoes and Cross-Country Skis

Few people visit the Cascade Mountains in the winter, but for those who do Crater Lake National Park features many miles of marked ski trails and unmarked routes. Some provide stunning views of the lake while other include broad vistas of the Klamath Basin. All trails are ungroomed and some may be hard to follow. Pay close attention to markers affixed to trees and orange poles in the open stretches.

Things to Know Before You Go

In the winter, weather can make viewing the lake impossible for almost 50% of the time. Access to the park and Rim Village area is only through Highway 62 and Munson Valley Road (7 mile road from Hwy 62 to Rim). Camping is only allowed in the backcountry during the winter. A free permit is required and camps can be no closer to a plowed road than 1 mile. Permits are

available at the Steel Visitor Center by Park Headquarters.

Entering the caldera is extremely dangerous and illegal, due to the cliffs and rockslides. Skiing and snowboarding are prohibited on roads and parking areas open to automobile traffic. As a courtesy to skiers, snowshoers should refrain from walking on ski tracks.

Easier Trails

Mazama Loop

Trailhead: Just north of Hwy 62 and summer fee booth, 4 miles south of HQ

Markings: Blue diamonds on trees and orange poles in clearings

Distance: 1.7 miles

Features: Good trail for beginning skiers. Flat rail loops along Annie Creek Canyon.

West Rim Drive

Trailhead: Snowramp across from Rim Village Restrooms.

Markings: None, unplowed road

Distance: 1.2 miles to Discovery Point, 2.3 miles to Wizard Island Overlook, 3.1 miles to Union Peak Overlook, 6 miles to North Junction

Features: Most popular trail for views of Crater Lake. Discovery Point is a broad level

viewpoint overlooking Wizard Island. Wizard Island Overlook is a small viewpoint providing a closer look at the island. The road climbs 240 feet to Union Peak Overlook for views of other Cascade volcanoes. North Junction is past Watchman and Hillman peaks where North Entrance Road comes in (groomed snowmobile route).

Beyond the Union Peak Overlook, the road traverses a steep cliff face on the north side of Watchman. This area has steep dropoffs and avalanche-prone slopes. Do not hesitate to remove your skis or turn back if conditions warrant.

Intermediate Trails

Hemlock Loop

Trailhead: Snowramp across from Rim Village Café, snowramp near closed Crater Lake Lodge and snowramp 1.5 miles south of Rim

Markings: Blue diamonds on trees and orange poles in clearings

Distance: 1.3 miles

Features: Mountain Hemlock forest punctuated with mountain and lake views.

East Rim Drive

Trailhead: Pullout 150 yards south of HQ

Markings: None, unplowed road

Distance: 1.8 miles to summit of First

Climb, 3.1 miles to Vidae Falls, 4.5 miles to Sun Notch

Features: First Climb is attained by ascending 436 feet past forest and creeks. From that summit, the road descends towards Vidae Falls, crossing potential avalanche areas. A bypass is available (see Avalanche Bypass handout). Further up the valley, climbing 505 feet the road crosses another avalanche zone (bypass available). Skiers then leave the road for the final 0.25 miles to Sun Notch. The view of the lake is dramatic but stay well back from the caldera edge and its dangerous snow cornices.

Advanced Trails

Raven Trail

Trailhead: snowramp near Crater Lake Lodge and pullout 150 yards south of Park HQ

Markings: Blue diamonds

Distance: 1 mile

Features: Drops 610 feet from Rim Village through potential avalanche area then to East Rim Drive pullout.

Dutton Creek Trail

Trailhead: Snowramp across from Rim Village Restrooms. Ski west and look for sign on south side of West Rim Drive.

Markings: Blue diamonds, and orange and red blazes

Distance: 4.6 miles

Features: From Rim Village, the trail drops 1,000 feet in 2.5 miles through woods to the Pacific Crest Trail. Following the PCT south, the trail climbs 250 feet to a junction. Left follows the spur towards Mazama Village and right takes the PCT to Hwy 62.

Lightning Springs

Trailhead: West Rim Drive, 2 miles from Rim Village

Markings: Blue diamonds

Distance: 4 miles to PCT, 9.6 miles to Dutton Creek Trail.

Features: Longer loop through woods and along PCT.

Map

